FLOWERS OF FABLE

CHILDREN'S BOOK
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FLOWERS OF FABLE:

FOR CHILDREN.

WITH TWENTY-FOUR ENGRAVINGS.

BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY WAITT & DOW.

CINCINNATI: WM. TRUEMAN & CO.

1832.

Entered according to act of Congress in the year 1832,
By Waitt & Dow,
in the Clerk's office of the District of Massachusetts.

WAITT AND DOW'S PRESS.

NOTE.

For the designs in the following pages, we have been indebted to a work by the celebrated Northcote. For the hints of most of the fables we have been obliged to the same source, though they have all been re-written, and adapted to the understanding of children. Two or three of them, however, have been translated from the German.

CONTENTS.

Page.

Philosopher and the Glow-Worm.....9

Two Rats.....13

Deceived Eagle.....17

Mastiff and Goose.....20

Wolf grown old.....24

Proud Lady and Caterpillar.....27

Paper Kite.....29

Fly and Trout.....32

Club of Birds.....35

The Idler caught Napping.....41

Congregation of Pious Animals.....47

Owls' Assembly of Birds.....51

Page.
Snail and Butterfly.....57
Bee and Cuckoo.....62
Philosopher and Sheet of Paper.....65
The Gardener and his Master.....68
The Complainer.....72
Lion and Hare.....78
Pen, Ink and Paper.....80
The Two Scythes..... 84
Wild and Tame Geese.....88
Lion and Council of Beasts.....91
Lap-Dog and Hound.....95
Lion and Ass.....97
Lion and Snake.....99
The Negligent Trooper.....101
Bee and Butterflies.....103
Silk-Worm and Spider.....107
Fox, Weasel, and Rabbit.....109
Lion and Ape.....112

Page.
Butterfly and Ant.....117
Nightingale and Swallow.....121
Fly and Taper.....123
The Glow-Worm.....125
Mastiff and Curs.....127

FABLES.

THE PHILOSOPHER AND THE GLOW-WORM.

It was a bright moonlight evening. The busy cares of day were over, and slumber

gently closed the eyes of the happy. Every thing in nature was quiet, and wore an air of serenity and joy. It was a time of thought and meditation.

A philosopher, who had wandered forth to gaze on the beauties of the night, was pursuing his tranquil path, lost in reflection. On a sudden his eye caught a glance of a glow-worm, which was shining in the grass. He was bearing round his little trail of fire, and felt himself far superior to any other worm that crawled on the earth.

The sage looked at the proud worm for a moment or two, then stooped and gently lifted him in his hand. The poor creature was alarmed at this treatment, and withdrew the ray of light, which had but just now added so much to his pride.

Astonished at this, the philosopher looked at it for some time in silence, for he thought that the worm was dead. He then threw it aside, making the following exclamation on the fate of the little creature:

'This poor worm is dead, and his light and splendor have died with him. Thus it is with all the ambitious and haughty. For awhile they glitter in borrowed beauty, and bask in the blaze of prosperity. But a dark day comes to them, and with a single turn fickle fortune carries them to the bottom of her wheel.'

The glow-worm, however, was still alive, and listened to every word that the philosopher was saying. Again trimming his little lamp, he shone more brightly than ever.

Before taking his leave, he thought best to give the sage a little of his mind.

'Know, most revered sage, that it is the lot of man to shine, as well as of the glow-worm. I know my own sphere, and it is the sphere of man to walk in the path that leads to fame. If he were prudent and wise, and in dangerous times carefully checked and concealed the fire of ambition, then, like me, he might again shine with new lustre. But he still glitters on, with a false pride, and when once extinguished his light is never rekindled.

THE TWO RATS.

A SHREWD old rat, who was always on the search for delicate bits, fell in with a nice piece of cheese. It was however, unfortunately in a trap; and he had lived long enough to know that a steel trap was not to

be trifled with. He sat for some time looking wistfully at the cheese, when a young friend of his happened to pass that way. This poor fellow was a thoughtless sort of a mouse, and, just in the time of need, forgot all the cautions he had received from his parents.

The old rat put on a kind look and spoke to him. 'I have just eaten a hearty meal,' said the hypocrite, 'and am very glad that I am able to help my young friend to one. Say nothing—but there is the nicest piece of cheese I have seen this twelvemonth. You can feast like a prince.'

'I thank you sincerely,' said the mouse. 'You are perfectly welcome,' replied the rat, 'and the sooner you fall to your dinner, the surer you will be of it.'

Young mice, when they are hungry, seldom stand much upon ceremony. Our inexperienced mouse merely bowed, and sprang upon the tempting morsel. 'Click' —goes the trap, and he is caught fast between its steel teeth.

'You should not have been so hasty, my young friend,' said the rat. 'You will not have need of bread and cheese much longer, so it would be mere waste for you to eat this. I begin to feel a little hungry myself, and it is not worth while that this nice morsel should be lost.' So he devoured the cheese, and left the mouse to his fate.

There are many people in the world quite as cruel and selfish as the rat in the

fable. The young should take warning by the fate of the mouse, and not be seduced into schemes which may prove their own ruin, and the benefit only of those who mislead them.

THE DECEIVED EAGLE.

An eagle was soaring proudly at a great height in the air, when he saw what appeared to him a fine fat hare sleeping upon the grass. Being quite hungry, and wasting but little time in reflection, he descend-

ed rapidly from the clouds, and pounced upon his victim.

He was moving upwards very swiftly, with the prey in his talons, when he discovered that he had made an unpleasant mistake. His neck was seized with a terrible gripe, and he found himself in the claws of a ferocious wild-cat. This was a disagreeable neighbor, and he tried very hard to get rid of him.

It was all in vain. The cat was determined to go down the same way by which he came up. Down, down, went the eagle, and the cat still kept his hold with both teeth and claws. At length they both reached the ground, but the eagle was dead.

We can hardly grieve when we see the wicked and cruel caught in their own snares. The rapacity of the eagle was dearly repaid by his severe punishment.

THE MASTIFF AND THE GOOSE.

We all know that the goose is not famous for her wisdom, and it is even usual to say, that a very foolish person is as silly as a goose. A bird of this kind was once feeding her young by the side of a pond.

Now geese, in such circumstances, are always very proud and disagreeable. They are noisy and troublesome to any animal that approaches them; but at the same time they cannot do them any mischief.

The goose I am now telling you about, was particularly noisy. She said that the pond was her own, and that she should drive away any one who should approach. If a duck, or pig, or chicken came near, she would set up a great hissing, and flutter her clumsy wings, till she drove the intruder away. Even the cat was driven away by her show of giving battle.

A large dog, who had been some time about the farm, felt thirsty one day, and thought he would lap a little water from

the pond. The goose flew at him in a rage, flapped her wings, and pecked with her beak.

The dog was very much provoked, and twenty times almost concluded to give a sly snap at her. He was afraid, however, as his master was nigh and would punish him. So he vented his anger by telling the goose she was a fool, and that those who had neither weapons nor strength, better at least be civil. Saying this, he walked quietly forward to the pond, drank as much as he wished, in spite of the goose, and then returned to his master.

People who are noisy and quarrelsome, and at the same time weak and cowardly,

expose themselves to continual contempt. If they escape from due punishment, they most frequently owe their safety to their insignificance.

THE WOLF GROWN OLD.

A WOLF had long been the leader of his herd, and surpassed them all in ferocity and courage. Many were the sheepfolds that had suffered from his ravages, and many a poor horse and cow had fallen under his cruelty.

At length, however, he had grown so old as to be unable to render any further service to his companions. Notwithstanding all that he had before done for them, and all the fine dinners his cunning had provided for them, they drove him away and entirely deserted him.

Thus solitary and almost helpless, he was wandering through the forest, when he met with the carcass of a fawn, which had been killed by a hunter, who intended to return soon and carry it away.

His old companions soon crowded about him, and offered their assistance in devouring the prize. 'We are all friends,' they said, 'and it is the least we can do to share our good fortune.'

The old wolf was very angry, but he was not strong enough to offer any resistance. 'O yes,' he replied with a sneer, 'we are all very good friends now; but yesterday you drove me from your herds, and refused me either to profit by your plunder, or to partake of your protection.'

There is no bond among the profligate but that of selfishness. No length or number of services will attach the wicked to one whom they have served as a friend, or followed as a leader. In the turn of fortune they desert him, and leave him unprotected to suffer the punishment of his crimes.

THE PROUD LADY AND THE CATERPILLAR.

'WHAT a troublesome creature,' said a fine lady, as she brushed a caterpillar from her gown. 'What a dirty, troublesome creature! Why, it devours the fruits, the shrubs, and the flowers; trailing along over the richest rose-buds and the finest flowers. Begone! I am so vexed with it!'

The caterpillar did not like this rude treatment, and resented it. 'Lady,' said he, calmly, 'you received your silks from the labors of an insect as humble as I am. I look but meanly at present, most truly, but I shall soon be painted with colors more beautiful than any which art can furnish to the pride of woman.'

'Pshaw!' said the lady, in great anger.

'When I shall soar away as a butterfly, point to the plumage that may compare with mine. Be civil and gentle, then, to us poor insects. You resemble us too nearly to quarrel with us. When you rise in the morning you are no finer than the humble caterpillar. It is only when finely dressed and richly decked with silks and jewels, that you are butterflies.'

THE PAPER KITE.

A PAPER kite was at one time mounted to such a wondrous height in the air, that it grew giddy with its elevation. In the pride of its heart it thought the attention of every one on earth was directed to one lit-

tle speck of paper, and that speck was itself.

'See the crowds of gazers,' it exclaimed. 'How they admire my graceful and lofty flight. But how much more would they wonder, if they only knew all that I am capable of doing. If I were only free, they should then have some reason for admiration. But a poor paltry string confines me to the earth, and prevents me from flying off among the stars. Once at liberty, and the eagle should be outstripped by me.'

While thus speaking, the kite gave a pull at the string, and after a while succeeded in breaking it. Alas, for the silly attempt! Deprived of all that supported it, and unable to bear its own weight, the kite flutter-

ed, and fell, and was soon soaking in a deep stream, where it was carried by the wind.

Too many of the young are unwilling to obey the hand that guides them, and break the ties that bind them to virtue and wisdom. Impatient of dependence, and confident in their own powers, they rashly sever the links that unite them to those from whom they derive all their strength, and fall in their utter helplessness.

THE FLY AND THE TROUT.

A PARTY of insects were amusing themselves one summer noon on the banks of a pretty stream. They flew about among the flowers, and now and then dipped their light wings in the surface of the water.

At length a large fly came floating down by them, glistening in the sunbeams, and looking with contempt on the small and frail creatures that could only murmur about upon the land, and were afraid to venture into the stream.

'What joy it is,' exclaimed the fly, 'thus to quit the dusty earth and the fields of air, and to glide gently and serenely in the current of these sparkling waters. How absurd it is in my brother flies never to leave the air; and that only because they have wings that will raise them in it.

'For my own part, I am determined to enjoy life while it lasts, and as well in the stream as the sky. I am tired of the old beaten track, and am happy to enjoy a new

delight; thus bathing in this beautiful brook, and basking in the delicious rays of the sun.'

While thus borne along, thinking and singing, a fine speckled trout caught a glimpse of him. Darting upwards with the swiftness of an arrow, he seized the boasting insect, and swallowed him in a moment.

Every one had better remain in his own station, and confine himself to that business and those pleasures for which he is best adapted. If the fly had remained in his proper element, he would never have been swallowed by the trout.

THE CLUB OF BIRDS.

A NUMBER of the feathered tribe who were fond of society, and flattered themselves they were all very agreeable, determined to form a little club, for their mutual amusement and instruction. It was com-

posed of a Kite, a Peacock, a Dove, a Parrot, a Mocking-Bird, a Magpie, a Jay, and one or two more of the smaller birds. They were in the habit of meeting every now and then, and passing a pleasant morning or afternoon in sociable chit-chat.

It once happened that the conversation took rather a philosophical turn. A question was proposed, on which each one was to give his opinion. It was rather a grave matter for the birds, to be sure; but it was thus proposed by the Parrot,—'What quality or character is most desirable?'

'Since I have put the question,' continued the Parrot, 'I suppose you will of course, expect that I should say a word or two about it myself. I have made up my mind

that of all our powers that of mimicry and imitation is the most useful and wonderful. It shows such a nice ear, such a fine eye, such a memory, such a tongue, such wit, such mind, that it is found only in those who possess the rarest capacity.'

When we think that the Parrot is such a pretty mimic himself, his remarks do not seem to exhibit a great deal of modesty. But the Jay and the Magpie agreed with him in all he said. The Mocking-Bird merely ran over the notes of half the birds in the forest, and imitated all with such perfect skill, from the twitter of the sparrow up to the sweetest song of the nightingale, that all the birds were most willing to allow that this power of imitation was the most desirable.

Just at this moment arose the Peacock, and spread out her brilliant plumage in the sunlight, till the whole assembly were dazzled with its beauty. 'This mimicry,' said the Peacock, 'is well enough to catch the applause of the vulgar; but it is a paltry gift when compared with great personal beauty, the possession of a stately carriage, and a display of gorgeous and splendid plumes.'

'It is my belief,' said the Dove, in a very quiet, inoffensive manner, 'that simplicity and purity of life, and a proper discharge of its duties with perfect innocence and love, are desirable above all things else.'

'This is all very well,' said the Kite, fiercely, 'but it is my very humble opinion, that a strong beak and sharp claws are the

two very prettiest things in nature. And do you ask why, my good friends? Because they can tear the plumage and spoil the beauty of the Peacock; make havoc among the Doves, in spite of their innocence; and visit with punishment the impertinence of the Magpie and Mocking-Bird. So you see, he is the best among you who has the most power.'

While saying these words, the Kite flew in rage into the midst of them, and began laying about him to the right and left without mercy. The Peacock took the hint about his fine ornaments, the Dove sought the shelter of his quiet nest, and the Jay, Parrot, Magpie, and Mocking-Bird, scattered in different directions, mimicking the angry notes of the tyrant.

We should learn to think modestly of those qualities in which we excel. The scholar should not think there is nothing out of his books, nor the soldier that there is nothing honorable out of the camp. The beauty should not centre all thought in the reflection of the mirror; nor the rich man imagine that every thing must yield to his wealth. While they are thus disputing as to their claims to superiority, the tyrant drives them all before him as the slave and playthings of his power.

THE IDLER CAUGHT NAPPING.

An idle fellow was lounging about one summer day with nothing to do, either for himself or any body else. In the course of his ramble he felt tired, and took a comfortable seat on the first resting place that he

saw. This happened to be a half-barrel of pitch.

Finding his seat very easy and cushion-like, he took no further trouble about it, and soon fell into a doze. The day was warm, and his doze deepened into a sound slumber. His dreams were not at all unquiet, and nothing occurred to disturb him.

At length, with the warmth of the sun, the pitch began to melt, and the sleeper began to sink gently, gently, into the yielding seat. When he was at length roused from his nap, he found himself so completely encircled and buried in the pitch, that he was obliged to cry out lustily for assistance.

'What have we here?' cried an honest farmer, that chanced to be passing that way.

'Help me out,' said the idler, 'or I shall be smothered.'

'Bless me,' thought the farmer, 'who has been so cruel as to put this unfortunate man into such a situation.' But he stopped to ask no questions till he had helped the poor fellow out, and placed him safely on dry land. His curiosity was then again awake, and he thought it would be no more than civil in the man to tell him how he happened to fall into the pitch.

'Why, really,' said the idler, scratching his head, and looking very silly, 'I cannot exactly tell, myself. Accidents will happen, and I believe it was all my own fault that I got where you found me. The truth is, that I accidentally seated myself on the barrel, fell asleep, fell in, and here I am.'

The farmer could hardly refrain from laughing when he saw his ridiculous appearance, but he thought it would be better to give him a little advice. 'My good friend, said he, 'you can learn from your adventure to-day a profitable lesson.'

'I should be happy to hear it,' said the man of pitch.

'Never to jump into the ocean, unless you know how to swim; and never to jump into the fire at any rate.'

'I have known as much as that,' replied the idler, 'from the time I was a boy.'

'One would hardly have thought it,' rejoined the farmer, 'to judge of your knowledge by the situation in which I just found you. But to be serious. Bad habits grow

upon us, and when a man gives himself up to idleness, and finds himself at last in a barrel of pitch, it is his own fault, and he must not always expect to be helped out of it so easily as you have been. I wish you a very good .morning.'

When a man of business neglects his shop or trade, to look after his pleasures, he must think of the barrel of pitch.

When the school-boy neglects his books and his lessons, to trundle his hoop, or to idle away his afternoon in sport, he must think of the idler and the barrel of pitch.

When the young or the old neglect their duties, and sacrifice their interests to the love of ease and idleness, I am very much mistaken if they do not before long find

themselves in a worse condition than the poor fellow who was stuck in the pitch. Look at his picture, and tell me if you should not think him in rather a disagreeable situation? Take warning, and never get into such a difficulty yourself.

CONGREGATION OF PIOUS ANIMALS.

ONCE in the old times, a very unusual fit of piety induced all the animals in the world to offer up their thanks to Jupiter, for the various gifts which he had bestowed upon them. When they had assembled together,

some of the most forward made a very public display of their gratitude for the particular talents and powers with which they vainly thought themselves blessed.

The Peacock, whose cry is as shrill as the grinding of a file, gave thanks for his most sweet and melodious voice. The Frog thought he had not much to boast of in the way of voice, but considered his natural love of cleanliness a subject for sincere gratitude.

The Bear returned thanks that he had been blessed with a disposition of such uniform serenity and good nature; the Goose, for the grace, ease and stateliness of her carriage, and the Mocking Bird, for the exquisite hues of its plumage.

The Viper offered his acknowledgments for the harmlessness of his nature; the Cuckoo, for the great variety of its musical notes; the Cat, for her faithful attachment and kindness to her friends; the Ass, for his great valor; and the Elephant, for his grace and beauty.

Jupiter received the thanks of the assembled animals, as a pious and acceptable act of duty. He considered it in return of blessings which they really did enjoy, but at the same time told them that it was not necessary to mention their particular endowments, as most of them happened to mistake in the gifts for which they had true cause to be grateful.

Each of the animals, however, went away

perfectly satisfied. The Peacock laughed at the idea of the Bear's serene disposition; and the Bear chuckled at the thought of the Peacock's musical voice. Each supposed that Jupiter's observation applied to his neighbor, but none of all the assembly once imagined that it applied to himself.

It frequently happens among men, that they are so perverse in their pride, as to imagine themselves in possession of talents, which every one else perceives them to be wanting. In every act of devotion, we should at least be humble, and not imagine that we have greater claims upon the favor of heaven than many of our neighbors.

THE OWL'S ASSEMBLY OF BIRDS.

An old Owl, with more vanity than beauty, more age than wisdom, and more malice than wit, took upon herself to be a very fine bird, and determined to give a magnificent party.

A beautiful star-light evening was fixed upon for the occasion, and all the beauties of the feathered tribe were invited. Our Owl received them all with a smile on her countenance, and treated them with the greatest affability and politeness. She told them she was much pleased to see them, and that they did her much honor by their kind visit.

Last of all the company came the Dove. 'I am sorry,' she said, 'to be in such haste, but I have only time to appear and pay my compliments, for I must be home to look after my little ones.' The Owl, however, pressed her to remain, and she sat down for a few minutes by her side.

The Dove could not help observing, that

as every one of her visitors retired, the Owl had a remark to make upon his or her character. The Magpie came and bid her good evening, and hoped soon to have the pleasure of seeing her again. 'I hope I may have that pleasure,' said the Owl, and soon as her back was turned, began :

'There,' she said, 'is the most cunning selfish thief that ever lived ; she will steal every thing she can put claw or beak upon, and hide it where it will be of no use to herself or any one else. I never desire to see her face again.'

The Parrot next paid her respects, and received a very affectionate smile and farewell. 'A good riddance,' said the Owl, 'that idle, prating fool knows not a word

she is talking about. She has no more sense than a stick, or stone. And then her profanity! Why, she swears like a sailor, and lies as fast as she can speak. I do not suppose she tells the truth once in a twelve-month.'

'Good evening,' said the Peacock, and retired. 'Did you notice that peice of conceit and impudence?' said the Owl. 'He has a very splendid tail to be sure, but I am thinking he has been cheated a little in his head, to make up for it. What he lacks in brains, he has made up to him in feathers. Very fine, to be sure.'

The Goose took his leave next, and the Owl looked after him with a smile of contempt. 'Stupid, awkward thing,' said she

'did he think himself obliged to come because I invited him. I never once thought he would have the impertinence to intrude into decent company.'

The Kite then took his leave, giving a kind of familiar nod to his host, as much as to say that he did not care a feather of his wing for her. 'There,' said the Owl, as soon as he was well out of hearing, 'is a blood-thirsty greedy fellow, that would eat his own mother alive sooner than go to bed hungry.'

In this manner the Owl abused all the guests as they took their leave. The Dove alone remained. 'Why, how is this?' said the Owl.' I thought you were in a great hurry to look after young children, and yet you are left the last of my company.'

'That is very true,' replied the Dove, 'but I have been afraid to think of going. You have been making so free with the characters of your guests, that I thought the only way, to save myself from being abused, was to wait till there was no one left to listen to you.'

If this story is true, we have little reason to wonder why the Owl is shunned by all other birds, and only flies abroad in the night. Slander is the meanest and most dangerous of all the vices, for it attacks without warning, and destroys in secret.

THE SNAIL AND THE BUTTERFLY.

A BRILLIANT Butterfly, gleaming in the sunlight with all the colors of the rainbow, lighted upon a blue-leaved violet. Here he was quickly espied, by a crawling Snail, filled with a sullen independence, carrying his

house upon his back, and scorning to be obliged to any one.

This dingy crawler approached with a slow pace to the gay Butterfly, and thus accosted him. 'You insignificant, tawdry, painted insect: is it possible that you can find nothing better to do, than thus to flutter about all the day, and show your fine colors? Upon my word, notwithstanding you are so very splendid, I like my own modest dignity and sobriety much better than your light and frivolous vanity.'

'Conceited, short-sighted, pretended philosopher,' replied the Butterfly, 'know that you have been despising in me the gifts which great nature has bestowed upon me, and such as it was not in my power to be-

stow upon myself. I ought not but to be grateful for them, and value myself as one of nature's favorites, in being thus adorned.'

'Pshaw,' thought the Snail; but he said nothing, and the Butterfly continued.

'Do we not perceive the will of Providence, shown through all its works, in that rich display of brilliant coloring? Are not the birds of the air to be admired for the beauty of their plumage, from the delicate and gilded humming-bird to the spangled and haughty peacock?'

The Snail thought there was some reason in his remarks, but still remained quiet.

'See the many tribes of the insect world,' continued the Butterfly, 'how beautifully they are decked! The fruits and the flow-

ers of the earth, too, have their richness and fragrance. Look at the splendid beds of the garden, the delicate rose and the flaunting tulip—or at the wild flowers that spring up in the meadows and forests—the gorgeous magnolia, or the modest violet.'

This, to be sure, was rather loud talking for a Butterfly; and it is very seldom that he makes so long a speech. But he had not finished even yet, and having taken a long breath, he again resumed.

'The sea, too, is full of beauty. It casts up fine pearls from its depths, and its inhabitants play around in garbs shining with gold and silver. And I have hardly time to add, that nature intended such crawling and dingy creatures as yourself, only to display her beauties to greater advantage.'

So saying, he fluttered away on his light path, leaving the Snail to crawl home at his leisure, and reflect upon what he had heard

There are certain people, who despise every thing brilliant or ornamental ;—proud of their own humility. Such people may learn a good lesson from the Butterfly. All nature was made for our enjoyment, and her most beautiful gifts are often the best.

THE BEE AND THE CUCKOO.

A BEE, flying from his hive in pursuit of flowers, fell in with a Cuckoo, who was chanting upon a bush in the neighborhood: 'Hush,' said the Bee, 'was there ever a more harsh and tiresome song! It is the same thing all day, 'cuckoo, cuckoo, cuckoo,' from morning till night. I never heard any thing so unvaried and disagreeable.'

This, to be sure, was not altogether civil in the Bee, for I do not think it was any of his business whether the Cuckoo sang well or ill. But hear the reply.

'Oh,' cried the Cuckoo, 'I wonder that you find fault with my song for want of va-

riety. Look at your own works; I am sure if you had a hundred hives to build, you would make them all in the same way. If I invent nothing new, it is not for you to blame me. Every thing you do is as old as the creation of the world.'

'That is all very true,' answered the Bee; 'but in useful works the want of variety is never an objection. In works of taste, however, and amusement, variety is every thing. We grow tired of a song that is continually repeated, and if it happen to be a bad song, too, the singer exposes himself to ridicule.'

As the Bee spoke the last words, he thought it was a great waste of time for him to stay chatting with a Cuckoo, and so

away he flew. There was a good deal of truth in what he said, but it must be confessed that he was very impertinent.

THE PHILOSOPHER AND SHEET OF PAPER.

A POOR philosopher was one day in the library of a wealthy friend, when he saw on the table a sheet of paper which had once been white. It was then blotted, and

scrawled over with nonsense and ill drawn figures.

'Oh,' said the sage, 'if this once spotted paper had been committed to the care of proper hands, it might by this time have contained invaluable wisdom. For it might have been adorned with a beautiful drawing, a fine poem, or a piece of music. But now it is utterly disfigured, and made worse than useless by blots and scratches, and silly words.'

The mind of an infant is like the unsullied paper, spotless and pure. The first impressions it receives are those which endure the longest. It is therefore a duty, as we value the future good of the child, to be

careful of the earliest instruction it receives. Praise children for being pretty, and they will give themselves airs, with a desire for display, and to gratify their van ty. Praise them for being good, and they will endeavor to be virtuous.

THE GARDENER AND HIS MASTER.

In the midst of a beautiful flower-garden there was a large pond, filled with many kinds of fresh water fish, such as are pleasant to the taste and the sight. The pond was also used to supply water for the trees and flowers of the garden.

The foolish gardener, being very careful in attending to his flowers, emptied the pond of nearly all its water, so that there was scarcely enough left to preserve the fish.

His master happened to be walking in the garden one morning, and saw what the silly fellow had done. He asked him what was the meaning of it, and told him that though he was very fond of his fruits and flowers, he did not wish to have his fish killed for their sake.

The Gardener received his master's remarks very kindly. Shrugging his shoulders as he went away, he declared he had long thought it a great pity that the poor fish should be robbed for the flowers, and he

would take good care that they never should be again.

From that time he never watered the flowers at all, morning or night, but gave up the pond entirely to the fish. A few days afterwards, his master again visited the garden ; but to his great surprise and sorrow, he found the flowers and leaves had begun to droop and wither.

He once more called the gardener to account. 'You blockhead,' he cried, 'remember in future, not to give so much water to the flowers, that my fish should suffer for it, nor yet, to save all the water for the fish, and let my beautiful flowers and fine fruits droop and wither.'

People are very apt to fall into extremes. One man gives too much time to his books, so that his body suffers from the consequences. Another neglects study altogether, and his mind loses the nourishment which it ought to receive.

My little readers, you must never neglect, either your lessons or your plays. Play is necessary to make your limbs strong and your health vigorous. Study is necessary to strengthen your minds and make you useful to mankind, and happy in your old age.

THE COMPLAINER.

A LAZY fellow, not over fond of work, was always complaining of the hardness of his lot, in being obliged to labor for his daily bread. In his folly, he accused father Adam as the cause of this heavy curse upon man-

kind, and blamed him for the weak and idle curiosity, which tempted him to taste of the forbidden fruit.

'And this too,' he continued, 'when he was in the midst of that delightful garden, with nothing to do, but to enjoy himself in idleness. How is it possible, that he could have been so weak as to yield to temptation?'

One day, he was working in the fields, and indulging in his usual murmurs, when he was overheard by his master. Being a sensible and observing man, the master thought he would try to cure the complainer.

He accordingly spoke mildly to him, and said: 'From this day, you shall no longer

have any cause to curse Adam, for having compelled you to labor for your subsistence. You shall live entirely at your ease, and I will furnish you with every comfort and luxury you can desire.'

The complainer was overjoyed, at this very generous and unexpected offer. Orders were immediately given, that he should be provided, daily, with a great variety of dishes, prepared in the most delicate and costly style. He slept upon down couches, dressed magnificently, and sat all day with his hands folded before him in perfect idleness. For a little while, the silly fellow thought himself perfectly contented.

Every day a covered dish was brought upon the table, which his master expressly

commanded him not to touch. He was charged never even to lift up the cover, to see what was under it, on pain of being sent back in disgrace to his former condition of life.

For a few days he complied strictly with this order. He never once thought of disobeying it. But after the novelty of the feast had worn away a little, he began to think more and more of the covered dish.

'It seems to me,' he began to say to himself, 'that, after all, there can be no great harm in just lifting the cover. I would not taste any thing under it for the world; but what harm can there be in a single look? My eyes could not eat it very well. There is nobody by, and how is my master going

to know any thing about it? He cannot see through a plaistered wall, and never will know it. I am determined to have one peep, at any rate.'

'It is very, very silly,' he continued, as his hand was already on the cover, 'it is very silly indeed in my master to give me a command of this kind. It is very unreasonable,'—and thus saying, he gently, gently raised the cover, when out jumped a mouse and was off in the twinkling of an eye. The mouse had been put there, on purpose to betray him if he should ever break his promise.

Soon after this happened, the servants entered to clear the table. When the covered dish was examined by the master, he

found that the complainer had disobeyed the commands that had been given him, and lost his right to a life of idleness.

The fellow was at once dismissed to his original state, with this advice: 'Ungrateful and conceited man, henceforward lay no blame upon Adam, but know it is your own act that has doomed you to labor. As you have thus no one to thank but yourself, never harshly blame those actions in others, which, in their situation, you would probably have committed yourself.'

THE LION AND THE HARE

A KING of the forest took it into his head to form quite a friendship for a Hare. He was amused with the little fellow's playfulness, and treated him entirely as a friend, rather than as an inferior.

One day, the Hare was asking his friend one or two questions, and among other things, said, 'Pray tell me if it is true that you Lions are so much afraid, as they say you are, of the crowing of a Cock.'

'Why yes,' answered the Lion, 'I must confess that we are. You will observe that all the wise and large animals have some little weakness of this kind. For instance, there is the Elephant, with all his prudence,

cunning and immense strength. Yet you have probably heard that the Elephant is very much frightened at the grunt of a Hog.'

'Very true,' replied the Hare;' 'it never occurred to me before, but I see the truth of what you say at once. This accounts, too, for the fact that we Hares are so much frightened at the bark of a hound!'

My readers will perceive from this story that vanity is not confined to the human race.

PEN, INK AND PAPER.

Pen, Ink and Paper once set out together upon a walk. It was a moonlight evening, and Paper, in his white coat, kept before and led the way.

Pen was a little vexed at this, and thought

he had as good a right to take the lead, as his neighbor. So he tossed his head with a flourish, and said proudly, 'Pray, my friend Paper, why do you march in front of your equals? It would be as well for you, perhaps, to keep alongside. You came, if you remember, from a rag-bag, and need not think so very much of yourself.'

'Let me be whom I may,' replied Paper, 'what would be your condition if it were not for me? Reflect, too, if you please, how often I have been obliged to suffer for your faults, and to bear abuse from all sides for your sake. Do you pretend to talk to me of birth? Look back upon your own, and remember that you are the son of the silliest thing on earth, a poor goose.'

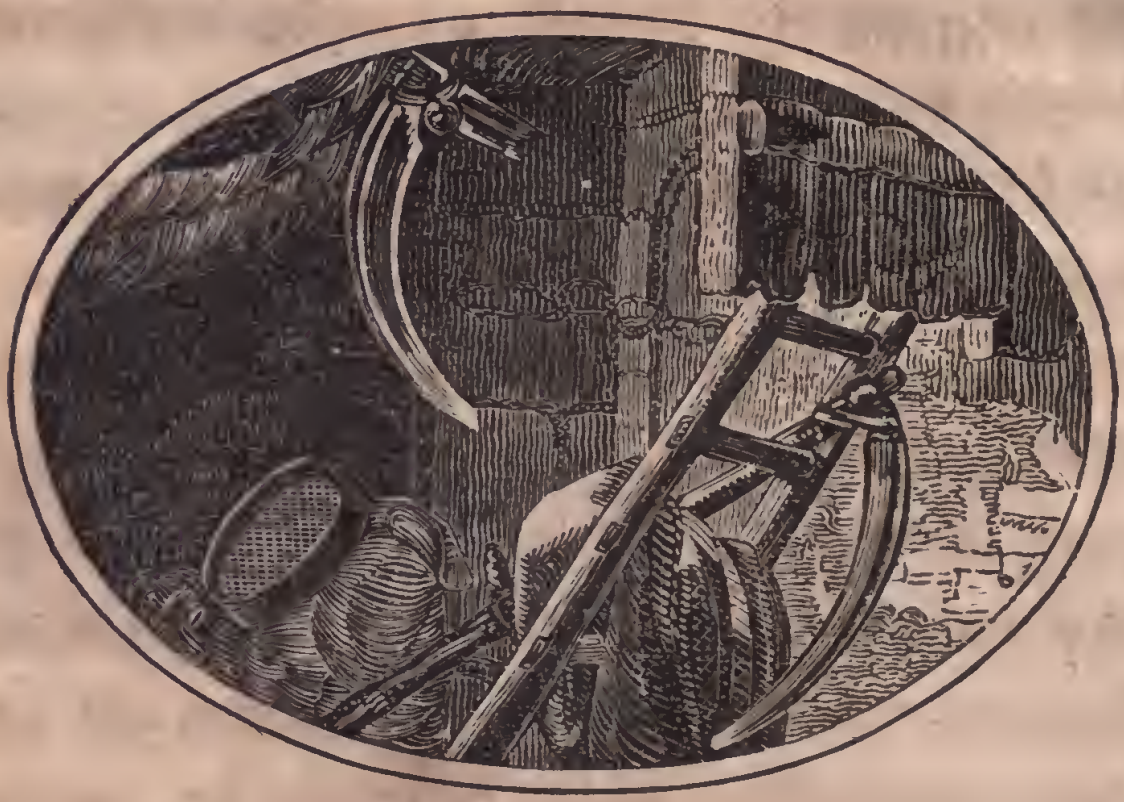
'It is from me,' replied Pen, 'that you derive all the merit you possess; and you are worth nothing, except when enriched by my labors.'

'How now,' cried Ink, 'what is the meaning of all this? What would become of you both if it were not for me? And again, I should be of no use, if it were not for you. So let us all unite and be good friends; for one of us is worth nothing without the other.'

When people are disposed to quarrel, and to treat their neighbors with disrespect, they should remember how much we are dependent upon one another. They should

reflect that their friends are as good as themselves, and that often they can do nothing without their assistance.

THE TWO SCYTHES



It happened once, that a couple of mower's Scythes were hung up together in the same barn. One was bright, sharp, and in good order, and was often put in use by its master. In the fine summer days, it was

carried into the fields, and made to cut whole acres of the green grass. The other was old, rusty, without a handle, and was thrown by as entirely useless.

'Friend,' said the rusty Scythe one day, in a lazy drawling tone to his neighbor, 'my good friend, I really think you are very much to be pitied. You labor continually for the good of others, and are yet every day or two fretted on that shocking whetstone. You are scoured and worked there, till you even strike fire, while I repose in perfect ease and quiet, with nothing to do or to suffer.'

'That may all seem very fine to you,' replied his bright neighbor, 'but permit me to say a word or two on the difference of our

conditions. I confess that I am obliged to labor, but then I am rewarded in the reflection that it is for the benefit of multitudes. This gives me my importance. The whetstone is not very pleasant, but by being thus sharpened I am able to become more useful.'

'That is all very fine,' thought the rusty Scythe, 'but it is all very silly too, in my opinion.'

'Now,' continued his bright brother, 'what is your situation? You are helpless, insignificant and useless; the victim of your pride and idleness. In the end you fall a prey to a devouring rust, unpitied and unknown.'

The idle are always unhappy. Without value or importance in society, they are no

better than burthens upon the earth. The industrious meet with troubles in the world, but these sharpen their wits, as the whetstone sharpens the Scythe.

THE WILD AND TAME GEESE.

A couple of tame Geese, who had been born and bred in a farmer's poultry yard, once strayed from their home, and amused themselves with swimming down a pretty stream. At length they came to a meadow, where they could find a broad play-ground and plenty to eat.

After playing about here some time, they were joined by a flock of Wild Geese, who were at first shy, and would not suffer their farm-yard friends to join them. By degrees, however, they became better acquainted, and passed a considerable time in each other's company.

The tame Geese renewed their visits to

this spot, and frequently met with their wild relations. One evening, they were making quite merry, and raised such a cackling that it reached the ears of a hungry Fox, who was prowling about at no great distance.

This artful fellow directed his course through rather a thick wood, which bordered on the meadow, and was within a few yards of the place before any of the Geese perceived him. But the alarm was given just as he was in the act of springing upon them; and the whole wild flock at once started into the air with loud and discordant cries.

The Wild Geese flew up, up into the air, and away, away, over field and forest and

mountain, on strong and bold wings, till they had left their enemy miles and miles behind them. But the two tame Geese, who had been living all their days in the shelter of the farm-yard, without using their own powers, rose but a few feet into the air, then dropped to the ground, and became the prey of the Fox.

All our faculties and powers are strengthened by exercise, and grow weak by disuse. The vigor of our bodies, and our minds, depend on our exercising each with continual employment.

THE LION AND THE COUNCIL OF BEASTS.

A CERTAIN Lion who had been for years the sole king of his forests, began to grow tired of seeking his own prey. So he made up his mind, to lay some sort of a tax upon his subject beasts. Calling them together,

he told them his plan, and asked them very civilly in what manner the tax had better be raised.

The multitude then sat for a few minutes thinking upon the proposal of their king. At length, a tawny old Tiger, who had seen a good deal of the world, observed that a plan had occurred to him, which he thought would be exactly the thing.

All the assembly crowded about, eagerly, to hear the speech of the Tiger; for the beasts are always disposed to listen, with much attention, to the remarks of so cunning and powerful an animal. You will notice, as you grow up, that in this respect, it is a good deal the same among men as it is among beasts.

The Tiger looked round him once or twice, and then said: 'I am of opinion, that the best plan to provide our king with food will be, to lay a tax upon vice. Let every beast decide upon the sins of his neighbor, and settle the amount of his tax. This will prevent all partiality and dispute.'

'No, no,' interrupted the Elephant, whose natural gravity was rather disturbed by this unjust proposal, 'this will never answer. It will only lead to injustice, ill will and oppression. In my judgment, it would be best to lay the tax upon the virtues; then leave it to every one to give in the list of his own virtues, and I have no doubt it would be the means of raising a very rich and large supply for the need of our king.'

If mankind were taxed for their virtues, we should find but a small number of the boastful pretenders, who claim every excellence for themselves, and deny all merit to their neighbors.

THE LAP-DOG AND THE HOUND.

'O!' cried a travelled Lap-dog to a friendly Hound, 'how very much our race has degenerated in this country! In that far-away land which men call India, there—there are dogs of the true kind! Dogs, my brother, you will hardly believe me, though I have seen them with my own eyes—who are not afraid to attack a lion and fight with him.'

'Indeed,' replied the prudent Hound, 'but are they able to conquer the lion.'

'Conquer?' rejoined the Lap-dog,—'I really cannot say whether they conquer him or not. But then only think of their attacking a lion!'

'O!' replied the Hound, 'that alters the case very much. If the dogs of India conquer the lions, then they are very much better than we. But if not, then they are not only no better than we, but a great deal more stupid.'

THE LION AND THE ASS.

An Ass was one day travelling with a Lion, who wanted the assistance of his bray, in frightening the animals he was hunting. The ass felt very proud of his company, and did not like to know his old acquaintance.

As they were travelling along in this manner, the Ass met an old friend of his own race, who very civilly bade him a good morning.

The Ass srarted back with a stare, and said, 'Really, you are very impudent; I don't know you.'

'Why not,' replied his friend; 'because you are in company with a Lion, are you any better than I am, anything more than an Ass?'

Those narrow minded people, who, in prosperity, forget the friends of their humbler days, are about as wise as the Ass in the fable.

THE LION AND THE SNAKE.

A LORDLY Lion, pressed by hunger, and seeking for prey, fell in with a Snake basking in the sun. Being in rather ill temper, and disappointed in not finding what he wished, the Lion spurned the reptile with his paw, and was passing on.

The enraged Snake, however, turned on him, and gave him a mortal sting; thus addressing him as he died: 'Tyrant, die, and let thy fate be an example to show that no living thing is so poor and weak, as to be despised and insulted, without revenge. Even the trodden reptile slays the proud king of the forest.'

We can learn from this a two-fold lesson. There is a warning to the tyrant, not to oppress and trample upon those beneath him. There is encouragement to the oppressed, to rise against those who wrong and injure them, because the humblest are strong in their own defence, and the lion may perish by the sting of an asp.

THE NEGLIGENT TROOPER.

On the evening before a great battle, one of the Troopers of the army saw that there was a nail missing from the shoe of his horse. Being a lazy and careless fellow, he said to himself, 'One nail is no great matter; I can attend to it some other time.'

So the horse was led out the next morning without having his shoe mended. The Trooper mounted him without reflection, and joined his company for the battle.

In the heat of the battle, the shoe of the horse loosened and came off. The horse stumbled and fell, and before his rider could recover himself they were both slain by the enemy, and this poor fellow probably lost

his life by omitting to drive a single nail in proper season.

It is always a good rule not to put off till tomorrow, what we may as well do to-day. If my little friends have a lesson to learn, they had better learn it to-day and play to-morrow. If they have a message to deliver for their friends, they had better deliver it now, rather than delay it an hour or two hence.

There is nothing that can be done to-day, that ought to be delayed till tomorrow.

THE BEE AND THE BUTTERFLIES.

It happened one fine summer noon, that a couple of very gay and brilliant Butterflies lighted upon the leaves of a white poplar. one of them had placed himself on the under side of the leaf, and the other upon the upper.

They naturally fell into a conversation, and for a while were very sociable and civil. At length the Butterfly on the under side, in the course of his remarks, observed —'Well, really, this is the most strange and curious tree that I ever met with. While all the other trees of the forest have green foliage, this tree has leaves that are entirely white.'

'What do you mean?' replied his companion. 'Have you lost your eyes? If you have not you must be perfectly crazy. Why, the leaves of this poplar are as green as any that grow on the earth.'

'Pshaw!' rejoined the other Butterfly, getting a little angry. 'Do you think I am blind, or am a fool? I can see and ought

to know, and there is not a leaf on the tree that is not entirely white.'

An industrious little Bee, who knew more than both the Butterflies put together, chanced to overhear this conversation. Perceiving that the quarrel was likely to become serious, he was desirous to restore peace. So he thus addressed the gay champions:

'My fine friends, you should never be so very confident, except you are sure that you cannot possibly be mistaken. Let me tell you, that your anger on both sides springs from your ignorance. This tree is indeed a very singular one; the upper sides of its leaves being green, and the under white; so you are both right and both wrong.'

How many people there are, who quarrel as ignorantly as the Butterflies in the fable! Taking a narrow and one-sided view of things, they are angry with their neighbors, who look upon them from a different side, for not seeing them in the same light with themselves. Ignorance is always obstinate, and folly is always quarrelsome.

THE SILK-WORM AND THE SPIDER.

'WHAT a slow creature!' exclaimed the Spider, as she was running through one of her own thin and quickly-made webs, and looking down with contempt upon the careful and long labors of the Silk-worm.

'It is very true,' replied the Silk-worm, 'I am quite slow; but then my labors are of lasting service. The beauty of distant countries is proud to deck herself in the produce of my toil; but your webs perish as quickly as they are made.'

'What a proud creature!' thought the Spider.

'If you weave your web in a house, the trim maid comes along with a broom, and

sweeps it, with yourself, perhaps, to the ground. I work on protected for the good I render, and you are despised and destroyed.'

Our Spider bade her neighbor a very good morning, and thought she would never undertake to boast herself superior to the Silkworm again.

We should not be eager to do much, but to do well. Time and labor are necessary to bring everything to perfection.

THE FOX, THE WEASEL, AND THE RABBIT.

A TIMID little Rabbit, who had a snug and safe retreat, in his burrow under ground, was troubled by a neighbor of a Fox, who used to lurk about the spot as if watching an opportunity to destroy him. His burrow

however, was so small that the Fox could not enter it; so he used to lie and sleep in security.

One day the Rabbit saw our Fox engaged in deep conversation with a Weasel, and, as it seemed, in a very kind and friendly way. This he at once thought to be an ill sign for himself; but he kept quiet and said nothing about it.

Now the Weasel is a very long and slender creature, and able to wind his way among very narrow passages. Soon after his meeting with the Fox, he entered the burrow of the harmless Rabbit, and attacked him with a great deal of fierceness and fury. The poor fellow had no chance of escape, except by flying from his hole; and

this he had no sooner done than he was seized by the Fox.

The Fox and Weasel soon began to tear him in peices. In his dying moments, the poor Rabbit thus uttered his last complaint: 'I knew that my fate was determined, when I saw such enemies as yourselves plotting together with so much friendship and kindness.'

The friendship of the wicked is only to enable them to act with more power against the good. They unite for their own selfish ends, to rob and plunder their neighbors with more ease and security.

THE LION AND THE APE.

An old Lion, who had been a good deal of a despot, was surrounded by hundreds of the inferior animals, each trying to outdo the other, in flattering their master.

A malicious pert little Ape, who was anxious to vex and trouble the old king, without directly insulting him, approached him in a very freindly manner to converse with him.

'It grieves me very much,' began the Ape, 'to see you surrounded by such false friends.' He then looked up at the Lion to observe how his remark affected him. Observing that the Lion did not change countenance, he continued:

'It is surprising that such hypocrites can be found. Before your face, they are as mild and obliging and loving as possible. But you are no sooner out of hearing, than no name is too bad for you.'

The Lion looked at his little adviser with contempt, but he said nothing.

'There is the Fox,' continued the Ape; 'why, to see him in your presence, one would think he loved you better than his own father. But it is all sham. It is no longer ago than last night, that I heard him call you a blood-thirsty old tyrant, who had not a spark of generosity about him.'

'Indeed,' said the Lion, 'that was quite a severe remark.'

'And that Stag there,' added the Ape,

'who is so proud of those big horns,—but for all that has not the heart of a mouse,—if you only knew how that fellow talked about you, upon my word, you would eat him alive the very next time you met him. He takes every chance to abuse you. He says you are mean and cowardly, without the least mercy, or notion of justice.'

The impudent little varlet then took breath, and gave another glance at the Lion, without daring, however, to look him in the face.

'I have to quarrel with the horse too,' continued the Ape; 'he hates you, and makes nothing of speaking his mind. About a week or too since, he said he should like to see you driven from your throne, and if his

friends would join him, he would like nothing better than to attempt it.'

The old Lion began to grow impatient, and to show his teeth. But the Ape had become too much interested in his subject, to see how it affected him.

'And the Bull,' again began the Ape, 'he says you are selfish and cruel—'

The Lion did not give him time to finish his remark, but with a single blow of his paw dashed him to the ground.

'Did he imagine,' thought the Lion, 'that he was going to abuse me without punishment, by giving me his abuse as the remarks of my faithful subjects? His example may be of service to all tale-bearers.'

There are some people, artful and malicious enough to take delight in giving pain to others, by telling the idle rumors and gossips they may have heard to their injury. Such people always shun and despise. They who are truly anxious to cure you of your faults, will tell you of them openly and honestly.

THE BUTTERFLY AND THE ANT.

EVERYTHING was clothed in beauty and brightness,—for it was a gay summer noon, when a Butterfly was flying idly about, displaying his fine wings in the sunbeams. In the course of his flight, he fell in with a

poor and industrious Ant, who was provid- for her future wants, by lugging home a little grain of wheat.

'Why, how now,' exclaimed the Butter- fly; 'what makes you toil and labor so through the whole day, for that mean and ugly body which you carry about with you? How can you spoil this beautiful summer morning by such mean and miserable em- ployment? The air is like the breath of roses, and the sky is clear as a mirror of crystal. I am roving about enjoying the flow- ers of the sky—whilst you are loaded with care, and wearied with fatigue.'

'True it is,' replied the Ant honestly. 'I must provide, however, against the cold and stormy days of winter, when I shall not be

able to travel far for my food, nor to find much of it at any rate.'

'Oh, what a stupid narrow-minded creature,' rejoined the Butterfly, flying off with proud disdain, to sip the dew from the flowers.

Before a great while, the Ant returned that way, bearing another golden grain to add to his winter stock. He then saw this very Butterfly lying dead beneath a heap of rubbish. Starting back with much surprise he could hardly credit his senses.

'Ah! my painted friend,' he at length exclaimed, 'you thought but little of such an end as this, when you were flitting about among the roses, and sporting in the mild air of that beautiful day. All insects, how-

ever gay, must certainly have a dying hour; yet in our pride and prosperity how certainly we forget it.'

When we must all die, shall we pass our time like the Butterfly, in idleness; or in the honest and wise industry of the Ant?

THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE SWALLOW.

A NIGHTINGALE was one day listening to the notes of a flageolet, on which a Shepherd was playing with great skill. On hearing these notes, he endeavored to imitate them.

A Swallow, who had been for some time listening to this concert, at last broke out in the following manner: 'How provoking it is to see a bird who sings as beautifully as you, taking lessons as if you knew nothing about it. Was not the song of the Nightingale heard with pleasure long before there was any musical instrument made by man?

You ought to be the teacher and not the scholar.'

'However that may be,' replied the Nightingale, 'if man has learned from me, I may now learn from him. He tries to imitate the wildness of my notes, and I may gain much by it if I can copy his manner of arranging them. Even the voice of a Nightingale can be improved by rule.'

No one should disdain to study improvement. There is nothing so humble, that we cannot derive an useful lesson from it. The greatest talents are capable of being the most improved.

THE FLY AND THE TAPER.

A Fly, who had seen but little of the world, was very much pleased with the light of a taper, and kept burring and buzzing about it continually.

He was delighted with the glare of its beams, and sported in them for many pleas-

ant minutes. At length flying too near, his wings and his body were burnt in the flame, and he fell lifeless upon the ground.

How many there are among the human race, sporting in the blaze of a pleasure, which may destroy them, when they least expect it! Beware, and be not caught in the fatal glare of the false pleasure.

THE GLOW-WORM.

A GLOW-WORM, knowing that he was admired for his brilliancy, whenever he appeared on a very dark night, grew proud and conceited of the notice that was taken of him.

He grew discontented at the thought of remaining in his humble retreat. He was desirous to come forward, and display himself in bright daylight to a crowd of gazing admirers.

But when he had placed himself in a more conspicuous situation, he had the mortification to discover, that his beauties could not bear a close inspection. In the sunshine, he was nothing more than a mere grub.

There are many men like the glow-worm. In a humble station they appear very excellent; but when their vanity or pride has induced them to attempt shining in a sphere for which they are not qualified, they only expose themselves to contempt.

THE MASTIFF AND THE CURS.

It happened one day, that an honest noble Mastiff was walking with one of his puppies by his side. He was a fine fellow, and long protected the farm-house in which he lived, against thieves and robbers.

As he was walking gravely along with his puppy, a number of little curs came out barking at his heels. The puppy was so angry at this insult, that he asked him why he did not fall on them and tear them to peices.

'Why, my son,' replied the Mastiff, 'if there were no curs, I should not be a Mastiff!'

Like the Mastiff a great man passes by the clamor of envy and malice in silent contempt.